



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

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FRANKLIN'S POPLAR GROVE SCHOOL RECOGNIZED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUCCESSES

OFFICIALS TO CELEBRATE TENNESSEE GREEN SCHOOLS PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENT

Franklin, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation will participate in a recognition ceremony during a school assembly at Poplar Grove School at 8 a.m. on Friday, May 23, 2008. The school, located at 2959 Del Rio Pike in Franklin, will be honored for achieving Performer Level status in the Tennessee Green Schools Program.

Elaine Boyd, Environment and Conservation's strategic management director, will present a green "Performer" flag and framed certificate to school officials and students in recognition of the Poplar Grove School's significant achievements in preventing pollution. Poplar Grove, a K-8 school in the Franklin Special School District, is the third school in the state to become a Performer Green School. It joins Williamson County's Centennial High School and David Lipscomb Elementary School in Nashville in this outstanding accomplishment.

"This is a great achievement for both the faculty and students at Poplar Grove," said Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Fyke. "Their commitment to help eliminate and reduce waste, save natural resources and prevent pollution is a great example of how everyone can make a difference. I applaud their leadership and encourage all Tennesseans to follow their example."

The Green Schools Program is part of the Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership, a statewide network of households, businesses, organizations, schools and government agencies working to protect the environment through pollution prevention. TP3 program participants are required to develop and to complete a project plan to help prevent pollution of air, land and water, while reducing waste and conserving natural resources. Performers also implement community outreach and mentoring in their programs.

Poplar Grove's Middle School Green Team has been a leader for many years in recycling and litter education, working with Keep Williamson Beautiful on community initiatives to reduce waste and litter. This year, an Elementary School Green Team was formed, which expanded environmental awareness and pollution prevention activities throughout the school.

Poplar Grove students studied utility bills, monitored the school's energy usage and changed 70 light bulbs to energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs. Other efforts include studying air pollution, promoting a Walk-Bus-Carpool Day and educating drivers about not idling in front of the school. Through a partnership with the Harpeth River Watershed Association, students also learned about preventing non-point source water pollution in their watershed.

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In addition to expanding the school's outdoor garden area, experimenting with composting and installing bird feeders, students also volunteered at Household Hazardous Waste collection days, gave away trees on Arbor Day and promoted the Stop Litter campaign at several events. Their presentation to the school board encouraged the purchase of equipment to facilitate recycling in all FSSD schools.

"The students at Poplar Grove School are influencing practices at home to save energy, decrease waste and improve air and water quality in their community," said Middle School Green Team Sponsor Barb Cooper.

"Even the very young children are serious about environmental stewardship as a result of our participation in this program," added Poplar Grove's Elementary Green Team Sponsor Star Stovall. "Everyone is so excited about earning the Performer green flag."

The Tennessee Pollution Prevention Roundtable, with assistance from the Department of Environment and Conservation, developed many of the guidelines for TP3, an initiative of the department's Office of Environmental Assistance. For more information on the Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership or to sign up for one of its programs, please visit www.tn.gov/environment/ea/tp3.

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